

SUPPORT FOR THE AMENDMENT

This Amendment amends specification by amending the title and amending the Abstract; cancels withdrawn Claims 35-40; and amends Claims 22-23 and 26. Support for the amendments is found in the specification and claims as originally filed. In particular, support for Claim 22 is found in original Claim 23. Support for Claim 23 is found in the specification at least at page 7, line 23. Support for Claim 26 is found in the specification at least at page 10, lines 25-27. No new matter would be introduced by entry of these amendments.

Upon entry of these amendments, Claims 1-34 will be pending in this application. Claims 1 and 22 are independent.

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION

Applicants respectfully request entry of the foregoing and reexamination and reconsideration of the application, as amended, in light of the remarks that follow.

Applicants thank the Examiner for the courtesies extended to their representative during the October 29, 2003, personal interview.

As discussed at the interview, the present invention provides protective layers for optical coatings. In particular, the present invention provides a temporary protective layer of carbon to protect optical coatings from scratches during manufacture. In addition, the present invention provides a tough scratch propagation blocker (SPB) protective layer that protects brittle and glass-like outermost layers of optical coatings.

Applicants thank the Examiner for the indication that "Claims 1-21 are allowed over the prior art". Office Action at page 5, line 4.

Claims 22-34 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 4,112,142 ("Schroder"). Schroder discloses a method of producing light-reflecting layers on a

transparent article. In Fig. 3, Schroder discloses a reflection increasing TiO₂ layer 14 on a SiO₂ layer 13. In Fig. 4, Schroder discloses a SiO₂ layer 16 on an Al layer 15. See, Schroder at Figs. 3-4; column 2, line 58 to column 3, line 22.

However, Schroder fails to suggest the independent Claim 22 limitation of "providing a substrate having an optical coating including furthest from the substrate a homogeneous outermost layer comprising *silicon nitride*". As noted in the Interview Summary dated October 29, 2003, "silicon nitride is not the same as aluminum in the prior art".

Because Schroder fails to suggest all the limitations of independent Claim 22, the rejection over Schroder should be withdrawn.

The Abstract and Title are objected to. To obviate the objection, the Abstract and the Title are amended to include the term "method".

Claims 1-34 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite because in Claim 1 "[i]t is not clear why a coating is formed and then subsequently removed". Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection. Independent Claim 1 is directed to "a method of making a transparent article". Why a protective coating is formed and subsequently removed during the Claim 1 method is not necessary to clearly define the scope of Claim 1. Because Claim 1-34 satisfy the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, the rejection should be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that the application is in condition for allowance. Applicants respectfully request favorable consideration and prompt allowance of the application.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further is necessary in order to place the application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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